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Jack Anderson's
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EXCERPTED

CONTROVERSY: TWO PEOPLE TO WATCH

Bill Casey. There's an in-house joke at the Central Intelligence Agency that Casey, who mumbles in a thick New York accent, is the only CIA boss who doesn't need a voice scrambler on his telephone. But he has made it loud and clear to President Reagan that he wants to keep his CIA job for four more years. And Reagan, who values loyalty, is unlikely to dump his 71-year-old CIA director.

Casey was disturbingly slow about placing his financial holdings in a blind trust. The CIA happens to be a clearinghouse for the most sensitive intelligence the United States gathers, including inside financial transactions that would be an investor's dream. He had access to intercepted telephone calls, cables and electronic transfers between the world's financial and commercial centers.

CIA sources came to me with whispered reports that Casey used this secret financial information for his personal profit. I conducted a painstaking investigation and could find absolutely no evidence of wrongdoing. On the contrary, I concluded that the accusations not only were false but that the accusers were CIA careerists who want to get rid of Casey.

They don't like his tendency to ignore proper channels and to promote derring-do covert operations. He has been known to meet directly with the lowest-ranking field agents for a briefing or to pass along his latest inspiration, often leaving the deputy director of operations in the dark about what his subordinates may be cooking up.

There's more than injured bureaucratic pride at stake. Casey might come up with some harebrained scheme that could be well on its way to an embarrassing disaster before it's caught--if it's caught at all.

Though Casey is personally a rockribbed conservative, he's intellectually honest enough to entertain views that go against his otherwise hard line. Casey also gives prominent play to competing analyses of an event or situation in the appraisals sent to the White House.